

Copeland Borough Council Change Programme – Progress Update

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WHAT BENEFITS WILL THESE PROPOSALS BRING TO COPELAND RESIDENTS?

The Change Programme Plan sets out the underpinning rationale for change in Copeland Borough Council. It covers the principle aims of the Change Programme and the proposed delivery approach including governance, roles, responsibilities, and the structure of the programme. The Change Programme Plan is designed to enable Copeland Borough Council to deliver efficient and effective services designed around the needs of its customers within the new financial reality.

WHY HAS THIS REPORT COME TO THE EXECUTIVE?

(e.g. Key Decision, Policy recommendation for Full Council, at request of Council, etc.)

RECOMMENDATIONS:

That the Executive note the progress made against the Change Programme Plan and note the proposed Phase 2 projects.

1. INTRODUCTION

The financial challenges faced by the Council are well known. These challenges mean that it is essential for us to change the way we work through new service delivery models that maximise the potential of our employees and maximise our ability to meet the needs of our customers effectively. The Change Programme is creating the required capability to enable the Council to become more efficient, effective and customer focused for the future.

Our customers expect excellent customer services from an efficient, business-like Council that provides good services that are value for money. Our Change Programme will enable us to rise to that challenge. Our Customer Services Strategy was approved in October 2012 and confirms our commitment to our customers by setting out a vision of increased choice, control and convenience that will enable them to contact us through a variety of mechanisms, all of which result in an appropriate quality customer experience.

The Council Plan 2013-2015 was approved in February 2013 at a meeting of the full council and sets out what the Council is going to do over the next two years. The

Change Programme provides the framework of how it is going to do it and how it will improve as an organisation to deliver excellent services.

2. The Change Programme

The Change Programme Plan is part of the overall Council Transformation Programme and must recognise that many of the resources required for its successful delivery are also required to deliver the changes and savings required to achieve the MTFS.

A Change Programme Board has been established and provides the governance and accountability for the delivery of both the Savings Programme and the Change Programme so that the overall transformation of the Council is controlled effectively. The Council has implemented a programme management approach with clear lines of accountability and clearly defined roles and responsibilities. The Chief Executive is accountable for the programme and Senior Managers and Heads of Services are responsible for delivering individual projects within the programme.

This has been a whole organisation approach because the difficulties and challenges we face are organisational wide. In summary we have a Change Programme Plan in order to:

- Make savings/cost reductions
- Create efficient and effective working practices
- Improve services for our customers
- Meet our legal and statutory responsibilities during a time of significant change

Ultimately, the service our customers experience is a result of:

- Our people
- Our policies, processes and procedures
- Our underlying technology and systems

So our change programme plan has carried out a series of targeted activities to help improve these and tackle known risks and issues.

2.1 Progress to date

The scope of Phase one of the Change Programme identified a number of key projects designed to create capability for the council to realise a number of key benefits in the areas of: statutory and regulatory risk, reducing waste and duplication and improving access to services for customers. These are described in further detail below:

Blick Replacement: The project included new door access controls at Moresby Parks and a new time recording system (Zeus). This project has created efficient and effective working practices for all staff including self-serve and reduction in the use of paper-based recording. Departments no longer have to complete their absence recording sheets; this now comes directly from Zeus. The project was completed in summer 2013.

Payroll – Auto-enrolment: Auto-enrolment of all employees into the pension scheme has enabled the Council to meet our legal and statutory obligations. The payroll system (SAGE) has been updated with new rules and this has resulted in compliance with the Pension Regulator requirements and fine avoidance. The project has been completed. All new starters will now be auto-enrolled and those that wish to opt will be able to do so.

Copeland Internet: The redesign of the Internet has allowed efficient and effective working practices and improvements for customers. The redesign has given the site a more contemporary design with its look and feel. Being built in drupal has resulted in cost saving as it attracts no licensing fees and has created a digital platform for the Council going forwards. The project was completed in May 2013.

Copeland Intranet: The new intranet site for council staff and elected members went live in December 2013 and provides a much improved user interface and a set of smarter tools for personalising the site and communicating across services. This has resulted in more efficient and effective working practices as staff have easy access to up to date information and self-service tools and apps. The site mirrors the internet by look and feel and overall experience.

Initial feedback has been positive and there is further review to be undertaken during January and February 2014 to refine the site further and update content.

Civica Payments Upgrade: The Civica Payments upgrade included upgrading the current software and the introduction of 3 new chip and pin devices with 3 new printers. The system is Payment Card Industry (PCI) compliant helping to ensure that the Council meets its statutory and legal obligations. The project has led to improved efficient and effective working practices and increased customer satisfaction.

The benefits to the customer of an upgrade of the Civica Payments system are a quicker and more secure system allowing faster processing times. Chip and pin transactions were taking a significant time to process. This transaction time is just 3 seconds now; much more like a customer would experience in a supermarket and is easing our queue time in Copeland Direct. Installation is complete at Whitehaven and Millom.

MVM Upgrade: MVM is a professional software application which supports Environmental Health and Housing. This project will result in the upgrade of the system to create more efficient and effective working practices. The project has 3 phases:

Phase 1: Upgrade to latest version which will deliver enhanced functionality e.g. private water sector supplies, allowing information to be managed and reported on in one place. It will also ensure that the system is in support and can be fixed if it breaks. This phase has been successfully completed and as a consequence, the old servers have been decommissioned and by replacing the physical MVM server with a new virtual server on existing Virtual hosts, savings have been made in running costs.

Phase 2: This part of the project will load the LLPG (Local Land & Property Gazetteer) database in MVM and resolve any data mismatches creating the potential to extrapolate Environmental Health information on corporate GIS automatically. This will support the automation of land charge searches. Work on the address matching has begun and will be complete by the end of February.

Phase 3: The final phase of the project will enable Environmental Health to capture information spatially and will support the automation of land charge searches. This phase will commence after Phase 2 is complete.

The benefits of the upgrade include a reduction in administrative effort, to be able to balance workloads easily and quickly, improved performance and improved business continuity.

ALL PAY App: The allpay App is a mobile application (App) available to download from the Apple App or Windows Phone store and Google Play enabling customers to pay their bills from their Apple, Windows or Android smartphone. This will provide improvements for customers as they will be able to pay their council tax from their phone at a location and time that suits them as the bill becomes available. This project will be promoted during the first quarter of 2014/2015.

Digitalisation of Crematorium and Cemeteries: Implementation of an administration and management IT solution to support process efficiencies through reduction in waste and duplication. This will help the Council to meet its legal and statutory obligations and offer efficient and effective working practices.

Other improvements will follow as the service becomes digitalised. Phase 1 of project is providing high speed Broadband Connectivity with a new fiber optic line. Phase 2 will then commence with installation of the software.

On line Book of Remembrance: The Book of Remembrance has been converted in to a searchable version available via the Council's website. This allows customers to access the book of remembrance electronically on-line rather than visiting the crematorium in person and releasing staff time for other duties so it is also an example of efficient and effective working practices convenient for our customers.

E-Access Planning: This project will support e-consultation on planning applications creating efficient and effective working practices, improve the service for the customer and reducing print costs. Applications are currently being scanned and training has been received by Council staff in order to continue the process. The software is installed and ready to use. A 'go-live' date has been set for the next financial year.

The e-access planning system has been fully configured for public access and the department are currently carrying out further testing and redesigning workflows to enable plans and relevant documentation to be scanned and made available for public consultation. This project will help to significantly reduce the printing budget and make it much easier for stakeholders to get involved in consultation.

Copeland Centre Reception Re-design: A key feature of the introduction of Universal Credit is moving residents away from applying in writing with a benefits assessor for benefits to applying online, self-service. This follows trends to digitalisation already underway and affecting residents. Individual Electoral Registration (IER) is another example of this and will be underway in the summer. To enable residents to make this transition affectively, the Council is working with partners to increase access to digital services. The re-design of the reception centre at the Copeland Centre will include the provision of self-service and assisted self-service access points for residents to use to access digital services. We will also be making general improvements to help manage queue times and improve the privacy we offer customers.

The design of the new Copeland Centre Reception is underway and a plan is in place that will see refurbishment work commence before the end of March and complete by end of Q1 2014/15.

Capita Connect: This new secure portal will enable customers to sign up to e-billing, check their balance and set up a Direct Debit. This will help to reduce the cost of printing of annual bills; provide greater visibility of the customer's account and help to increase the uptake of Direct Debits – the lowest cost option for revenue collection. The new online services will be live for customers ahead of the annual billing in March 2014.

Lean Project: The Revenues and Customer Services teams have been collaborating on a LEAN based Rapid Improvement Event (RIE) to examine working processes and look for ways to work more efficiently and effectively, which will result in improvements for our customers. The teams are making excellent progress and have made some quick win changes and a range of new scripts have been implemented in Copeland Direct.

Changes include:

- Automated DWP payments saving staff time - equivalent to 2 weeks of cash officer time.
- Procedure for cheque changed resulting in cheques being processed faster, not handled twice, and the work more evenly spread.
- Call back script directed to duty officer on counter this will reduce customer waiting time and see a reduction in repeat customer contact
- Additional information on the IVR / ATP to make payment options clearer reducing risk of payments being allocated incorrectly.
- Orders for Council Tax payment cards are now raised and fulfilled in the contact center.

GIS and making data available to INSPIRE: This project will enable us to meet our legal and statutory duties. INSPIRE is an EU Directive which all public organisations throughout Europe have a duty to adhere to. Failure to meet the requirements can result in a large fine. The requirements are that any dataset that the council holds that are classed as being in Annex II must provide metadata (data that details about the data - how, where, what) for that dataset, they must be able to view the data on a map and they must be able to download the data. We have the metadata in place and have just completed the upgrade to allow us to provide the downloadable and viewable element to the INSPIRE requirements.

2.2 ICT Support

As with most departments in the Council we have made cutbacks in the ICT service however, it is important to note the role that ICT have played in underpinning the majority of the projects within the Change Programme.

ICT has a critical role in enabling the Council's ambition, by providing both radically different ways for customers to access and use services, and encouraging new internal working practices which can improve both service quality and staff productivity whilst reducing the overall operating costs of the Council.

2.3 Phase 2

Phase 1 Transformation Projects were selected to deliver high impact outcomes during the financial year 2013/14. Following this initial group of projects there is a second phase of transformation projects that will deliver further efficiency and savings for the council. These projects are currently in the initial stages of planning; setting out clear objectives and benefits and assessing their appropriateness for implementation. This planning activity will also be informed by strategic reviews of the Council's services as the strategy for commissioning is developed. The diagram below summarises the Phase 2 Projects that have been initially identified and offers outline timeframes for delivery. This will be formalised during the final quarter of 2013/14 ready for progressing in the next financial year, 2014/15.

Proposed Phase 2

Waste Management Digitisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Develop a waste management IT solution fit for 21st Century•Improve customer access to real time information•Enhance waste management service delivery through new system
Mobile Working	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Enable staff to work from any location using any device (including non-council)•Improve remote access to service critical applications and working documents•Increase response times of ICT support and user self service
Accommodation Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Introduce new ways of working•Maximise value from the work place•Balance the cost of PFI
Customer Access – Channel Shift	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Increase range of transactional activities customers can complete online•Consolidate accounts to create a single account•Reduce contact in higher cost channels such as telephony and face to face
Payment Channels Consolidation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Consolidate the number of mechanisms through which customers can pay for services
Information Management Standardisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Implement the revised Information Management practices•Devise and agree strategy for ensuring good practice IM procedures are adopted
IER	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Enable residents to manage their electoral roll status online and in real time•Reduce the need for printing, posting and chasing letters to maintain electoral roll

3. CONCLUSIONS

- 3.1 Good governance is essential to ensure the Change Programme delivers the capability required for the Council to realise the anticipated benefits.
- 3.2 Using a programme management approach will ensure that we are able to manage a major programme of work effectively and ensure opportunities to join delivery up are taken.
- 3.3 This report outlines some of the achievements to date and indicates the nature of those in Phase 2 of the programme.

4. STATUTORY OFFICER COMMENTS

- 4.1 The Monitoring Officer's comments are: No further comment
- 4.2 The Section 151 Officer's comments are: The Change Programme Plan sets out to deliver a range of benefits to the Council within an agreed design principles framework. Governance of the Programme and Plan is overseen by the Board and funding if allocated to it from the Transformation Fund.
- 4.3 EIA Comments: The Change Programme strives to meet a number of goals which includes improving access to services for all our communities.
- 4.4 Other consultee comments, if any: None.

5. HOW WILL THE PROPOSALS BE PROJECT MANAGED AND HOW ARE THE RISKS GOING TO BE MANAGED?

- 5.1 The Change programme Plan is a series of projects which are scoped and managed. The plan is challenging given the resources available, with a number of vacancies remaining unfilled due to on-going staffing reviews.

6. WHAT MEASURABLE OUTCOMES OR OUTPUTS WILL ARISE FROM THIS REPORT?

- 6.1 Completion of the Change Programme.

List of Background Documents:

Council Plan 2013-2015
Customer Services Strategy October 2012